

Land Managers' Heterogeneity in Mediterranean Landscapes - Consistencies and Contradictions Between Attitudes and Behaviors

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Abstract: European rural landscapes face today several changes, which might indicate that an ongoing transition process is taking place. While these transition processes have been mainly addressed for Western Europe and landscapes dominated by intensive agriculture, they remain to be understood in Southern Europe, where large areas are occupied by extensive farming systems, maintaining a distinctive landscape character. However in Mediterranean areas, new ways of managing the land arise, no longer by the conventional farmers alone but also by a multiplicity of other land managers. Nevertheless, the dominant discourse in the farm sector, both in politics and in individuals, is still focused on production. Therefore to better assess the potential of land managers to adapt to changes and to meet the expectations that society articulates towards the farming sector, a description of the land managers' diversity deserves a renewed attention. A number of questions remain unanswered or only partially answered. Which land managers are contributing more to the changes happening? Which are the drivers that encourage or prevent innovation and changes in the holdings? Do all farmers behave in the same way? Does the attitudes-thoughts get translated into actual behavior-actions? In order to answer these questions a land managers' typology anchored on the multifunctional transition framework is proposed. It aims to understand which land manager type contributes more to the multifunctional transition bounded by non-productivist and productivist strategies in place. This typology exploits the combination between the behaviors-action in the holding and the expressed attitudes-thoughts. To achieve this typology, 373 questionnaires were completed by land managers in South Portugal. Results reveal in some cases inconsistencies between land managers attitudes and their action, in an opposite sense to what has been earlier identified in Northwestern Europe, and reflecting the heterogeneity of Mediterranean agriculture and land ownership. Thus, an understanding of the land managers types will lead us to a better understanding of what are land managers looking for in the landscape they use. This knowledge can support better oriented policies and management decision, certainly more easily accepted by land managers since their views, behaviors, attitudes and opinions are taken in consideration

Keywords; Productivism; Non-productivism; Land Managers; Attitudes-thoughts; Behaviors-actions; typology

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